



# IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & WELFARE

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## **Parents Urged to Ensure Their Children are Immunized Against Mumps**

Due to a large ongoing outbreak of mumps in the Midwest, the Idaho Division of Health and district health departments are recommending that parents of school-age children ensure that their child has received two doses of the mumps-containing vaccine, MMR.

Mumps is a viral infection of the salivary glands spread through coughing, sneezing and saliva. It can spread by sharing drinking glasses, kissing, sneezing and coughing. Symptoms including swelling of the glands close to the jaw, fever, headache and muscle ache.

For most people, mumps is a mild to moderate disease. There is, however, a risk of severe complications. The mumps vaccine, part of the MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) shot, is 90 percent effective in protecting against mumps if the person receives two doses. With one dose, protection drops to 80 percent. This means that a person who received two doses of MMR is better protected against mumps if they are exposed during an outbreak.

The first dose of MMR vaccine is recommended for children 12-15 months old, with the second dose usually administered between four and six years of age. Children of any age, however, can receive the second dose. Parents are asked to check their children's immunization records or with their healthcare provider to ensure their children have received both doses. Outbreaks in the Midwest have centered on college campuses, and college-age students also should check to ensure they received two doses for best protection.

**(more)**

Along with the vaccine, people also can protect themselves and others against the spread of mumps and other diseases by practicing good hygiene, such as covering their coughs and sneezes, washing their hands, and staying home when sick.

One case of mumps has been reported in Idaho so far this year but is not believed to be connected to the outbreak in the Midwest. This outbreak, which began in Iowa, has spread to eight states and infected more than 1,800 people. Idaho typically experiences 0-7 cases of mumps each year. Health officials continue to monitor for additional cases and are asking healthcare providers to report suspected cases immediately.

More information about mumps is available on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website at: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) For questions about mumps vaccination in Idaho, please contact your district health department, your healthcare provider or the Idaho Immunization Program at 208-334-5931.

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**(Editors: For more information please contact Tom Shanahan at 334-0668, or the public information officer for your District Health Department.)**